Vol. 45 No. 8 TRANSPORTER Nov. 2011

NJDOT passes the test of Hurricane Irene

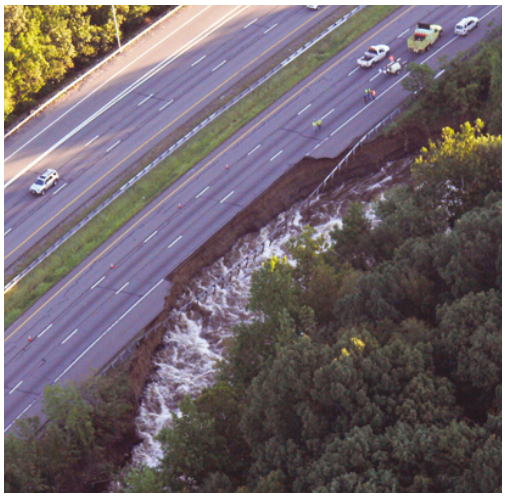
Hurricane Irene, just the third hurricane to come ashore in New Jersey in the past 200 years, barreled through the Garden State over the weekend of Aug. 27-28, leaving a wide path of destruction and flooding in its wake. NJDOT was ready and sprung into action before the first drop of rain fell, in accordance with one of Commissioner **Jim Simpson**'s favorite phrases: "Prior planning prevents poor performance."

Working closely with Governor Christie, the State Police and the Office of Emergency Management, NJDOT planned evacuation routes, executed temporary road closures and tracked and responded to more than 700 incidents in the hours and days that followed the storm.

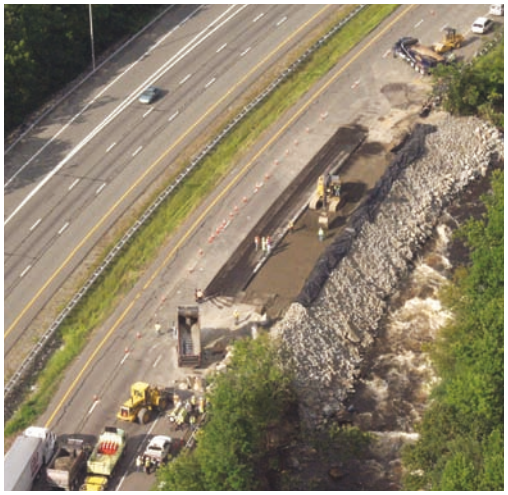
As the storm worked its way toward the East Coast, Governor Christie gave televised marching orders to sun worshippers up and down the Jersey Shore to "get the hell off the beach." They listened and responded and helped New Jersey execute an orderly evacuation on 1 million Shore residents and visitors to safer ground. Hundreds of other residents who live in flood-prone areas of the state took advantage of the shelters that were opened. NJ TRANSIT played a key role in helping Atlantic City residents relocate.

"NJDOT employees displayed remarkable focus and teamwork at all levels prior to Irene's arrival, during the emergency itself and until the last sinkhole and road washout was fixed," Commissioner Simpson said. "Our maintenance crews and Traffic Operations unit rose to the challenge."

A total of 3,000 workers from NJDOT and sister transportation agencies including NJ TRANSIT, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority and South Jersey Transportation Authority worked together to clear debris and create safe detours for motorists around floodwaters and other obstructions. Some of the major closures included I-287 in Boonton, Route 29 in Hopewell and Route 33 in Hightstown.



Before: Monday August 29th, I-287, Boonton



During Construction: Wednesday August 31st

After Construction: Thursday September 1st (opened to traffic at 4 a.m.)

"One of NJDOT's shining moments was the emergency closing and repair of I-287 northbound in Boonton," said Commissioner Simpson. "We were able to reconstruct this major artery and reopen it to traffic in three days – an astounding feat considering that some engineers who saw photos of the damage predicted weeks or months of work."

The shoulder of Route 287 northbound, just south of exit 44, collapsed into the Rockaway River. The raging river carried away a 15-foot-wide embankment and then chewed off the 15-foot wide shoulder, leaving 100 feet of guiderail dangling in mid-air. When the damage report came in about 1 a.m. Monday, Aug. 29, the flood waters were threatening to wash away the northbound travel lanes.

Thanks to the work of Assistant Commissioner **Richie Shaw**, Operations Support Director **Andrew Tunnard**, Operations Section Chief **Ahmad Ghorbani** and North Region Maintenance Engineer **John Gahwyler**, the plan to save 287 was developed and approved within hours, and a conga line of dump trucks laden of

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NJDOT passes

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Safety Service Patrol respond to roadways blocked by downed trees.

boulders and rocks headed to the scene. Four hundred and twenty truckloads later, the new shoulder was ready for paving and the road was reopened to motorists.

Flood damage to state and local roads and to thousands of homes became the signature fallout from the storm. Remnants of Hurricane Lee pounded New Jersey with more rain, adding to the soggy mess.

NJDOT checked for flood damage on all of its 1,800 bridges that span waterways in the days after the storm. NJDOT reached out to county engineers to offer technical assistance in their work to assess any damage to their approximately 2,500 bridges.

The Department responded to several calls for assistance from local and county governments, including Cranford where we helped haul away ruined household items from many sections of that hard-hit municipality.

The value of the online travel and traffic information website, www.511nj.org, and the 511 telephone line, became abundantly clear during and after the storm, as motorists relied on them for up-to-the-minute information about flooded roads and detours as they started to resume their normal travel routines.

Residents typically make about 5,000 calls per weekday, but within a four day period – from Friday, Aug. 26 through Monday, Aug. 29, more than 92,000 calls were made. Use of the convenient website exploded from 7,000 visits per day to 450,000 visits during those same four days.

In post-incident reviews of strategies and performance, finding included:

- Mobile cameras used to monitor conditions on I-287 proved to be a valuable asset. Traffic Operations is currently canvassing staff to see where it would be feasible to install these mobile cameras in the future. They serve as an "extra set of eyes" especially during emergency situations.
- Equipping vehicles with plows to help clear downed trees speeded work to reopen roads. Statewide Traffic Operations was able to utilize its fleet of Incident Management Response Team vehicles to assist Maintenance in removing debris from highway lanes.
- More than 80 Priority Repair work orders were processed in an orderly fashion through the Maintenance Engineering Unit.
- **Jim Hadden**, 511 Program Manager, accepted a Traffic Safety Excellence Award on behalf of Statewide Traffic Operations in October at the 7th Annual Safety Forum at Mercer County Community College. The award cited our innovative and effective traffic safety campaigns – the "4E's" of traffic safety: Engineering, Enforcement, Education and Emergency Response – during and after the storm.

TRANSPORTER

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Lt. Governor
Kim Guadagno

Commissioner
James S. Simpson

The Transporter is published for the employees and retirees of the New Jersey Department of Transportation. It is written and designed by the Communications Office, Main Office Building, PO Box 600, Trenton, NJ 08625.

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9/11/01 – We will never forget

On an overcast and solemn morning of Friday, Sept. 9, NJDOT employees gathered at the Employee Memorial Courtyard to commemorate the 10th anniversary of 9/11/01 and the 11th anniversary of NJDOT's Employee Memorial.

"These two worthy commemorations were woven together by fate," said NJDOT retiree and Master of Ceremonies **John Spedding**. "Remembering the victims of 9/11 and our fallen colleagues through an annual ceremony is a testament of the culture of caring, and the tradition of service that helps define what the New Jersey Department of Transportation is all about."

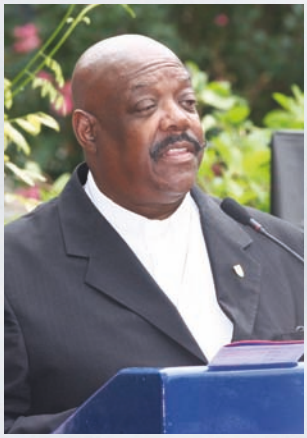
"9/11 affected all of us as Americans and it affected some of us on a very personal level," said Deputy Commissioner **Joe Mrozek** who presided over the ceremony on behalf of Commissioner James Simpson. "On scene at Ground Zero less than one month after the tragedy in 2001, I remember being amazed not by what I saw there – but the absence of what I saw – where over 16 acres of buildings and office space had once stood, I could find not one desk, or file cabinet, not one computer that was recognizable in all the rubble. Ten years later, I am still struck by the magnitude of that."

Former Commissioner **Jim Weinstein**, who led the Department on 9/11 and who now serves as Executive Director of NJ TRANSIT, told the crowd, "We must take responsibility and we must always be vigilant." Seventy-four DOT employees died at the World Trade Center as a result of the attack.

Former Commissioner **Stephen Dilts** followed Jim Weinstein and urged everyone to "rededicate ourselves to those things that they aimed to destroy, those things that ensure a brighter future for our country… by pulling together in the spirit of dedication to these uniquely American values, we honor the memories of those we lost 10 years ago this weekend, and those that we lost over the past 55 years whose names are represented on this Memorial Wall."

Brenner

Ciaruffoli


Johnson

Spedding

Miller

Tunnard

Among others who spoke were Office of Emergency Management employee **Michael Reina**, whose brother Joe was among those who perished in New York on 9/11. NJDOT's new Director of Operations Support, **Andrew Tunnard**, who is a Commander in the United States Naval Reserve, honored our country's military, including the NJDOT employees who remain active in various branches of the Armed Services. Commander Tunnard, who has served our nation for 22 years, said, "The most common trait of individuals who choose to serve their country is that we believe in a cause greater than self. It is the same drive of police officers, firefighters, EMTs and all emergency responders. It is also the same drive of many – I dare say the majority – of people I've met right here at NJDOT."

Commander Tunnard was able to secure the ship's bell from the USS Trenton for the 10th anniversary ceremony. The USS Trenton was an Omaha-class light cruiser and the second Navy ship named for the City of Trenton.

Tributes were also offered to law enforcement, firefighters and emergency responders by Major **Edward Cetnar**, Commanding Officer of the Special Operations Section of the New Jersey State Police; **Al Brenner**, Director, Division of Support Services; and Task Force Leader **Jim Riley** of NJ's Task Force One. Al spoke

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Queen of Laughter visits NJDOT's Toastmaster Club

The self-described "Queen of Laughter" Sherri Waryasz visited NJDOT's Toastmaster Club in September. In preparation for the National Toastmaster Competition at Bally's Las Vegas, Waryasz, of Princeton, brought her brand of humor to the NJDOT club with her essay titled, "My biggest bully."

"My biggest bully was myself, but I found ways to fight it. Don't waste your time… make it worthwhile, keep up your energy and make sure that wherever you are, bring happiness," said Waryasz, who made it to the semi-final round in Las Vegas before being eliminated.

Waryasz

9/11/01 Continued from page 3

lovingly of his son Corporal Al Brenner and his willingness to volunteer for the military after finishing high school. As many know, Al's son was injured and his canine Grief was killed while both were on tour in Afghanistan. Al recalled sharing time with son at Walter Reed while he recovered from his wounds and thinking how blessed his family was that his son was alive while so many families had lost their children to war.

While **Jeff DeGroff** played bagpipes, Assistant Commissioner **Rich Shaw**, Operations, honored our 36 fallen colleagues whose names appear on the Memorial Wall. Assistant Commissioner **Candie Brown**, Administration, read the names of NJDOT employees who had died since last year's ceremony. **Shaenna Miller**, Project Management, sang a magnificent rendition of *God Bless America.* Retiree Tom Johnson gave the invocation, and **Chrystal Section**, Civil Rights and Affirmative Action, offered a closing prayer.

NJDOT Golf Outing

The annual NJDOT golf outing was held on Sept. 20. Pictured from left to right are this year's low-gross winners (-11) Bill Gosselin, Ben Lee, and Harry Yaede. The event, held at Mountain View Golf Course, was a great success. Next year's outing is scheduled for the first Friday after Labor Day, Sept. 7 at Mountain View Golf Course. Anyone interested in participating can contact John Zim at 609-530-2314.

Planning to retire?

If you are planning to retire, the DOT Retirees Association (DOTRA) is always looking for more members. Visit its website at www.DOTRA.org

Obituary

NJDOT Retiree **Herman J. Krieg** passed away on Sept. 1. He was a civil engineer with the NJ Department of Transportation for more than 50 years. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Denise; his children, Karen of Washington, D.C., and Kristine of Oradell; and his grandpets, Scout, Thelma, Louise, Rosie and Sasha.

NJDOT's Service Anniversary Awards Celebration

Administration

35 Years of Service
Richard Domboski
Lucy Sanderson
Ann Marie Webb

30 Years of Service
David Alvin
James Lawrence
Steven Servillo

25 Years of Service
Donna Deveney
Lynne Gash
Kenneth Ives
Anthony Pellegrino
Anthony Ritardi
Elizabeth Rojas
Raymond Seliger
Sharon Simmons
Dean Yanucil

Capital Investment Strategy and Grant Administration

40 Years of Service
Robert Carr

35 Years of Service
William Beans
Lorraine Stallings
Suzanne Ware
Agnes Wiliams

30 Years of Service
David Reimer

25 Years of Service
Karen Abbott
Shukri Abuhuzeima
Karen Adams
John Allen
Joseph Birchenough
Carol Bove
David Bruccoleri
Helen Burt
Shelly Gladwell
Shari Leichter
Salim Mikhael
Ashwin Patel
Kevin Patrick
Mila Tau
George Williams
Thomas Zim

Chief Financial Officer

35 Years of Service
Roseanne Burchill
Gary Gorish
Annette Schimpf
Mina Tsintzas
Catherine Zelli

30 Years of Service
Patricia Konstant

25 Years of Service
Linda Barber
Gary Brune
Bharat Dalal
Thomas Messina
Deborah Spoto

Government & Community Relations

25 Years of Service
Patricia Steele
Olga Zeleznock
Rosemary Turunc

Statewide Traffic Operations

35 Years of Service
David Fluellen
Mark Smith

30 Years of Service
Mary Horne
Ryan McCann

25 Years of Service
Donald Albanese
Timothy Bourne
William Brantley
Richard Casmer
James Hadden
Paul Hartle
Michael Pilsbury
Frank Pooley

Operations

35 Years of Service
Satish Bahl
Kevin Bloom
Jeffrey Clement
Antonio Delatorre
Michael DeVita
Raymond Marshall
Thomas Ronan
Timothy Rudolph
Michael Unangst
William Villei

30 Years of Service
Mark Abbott
Walter Adams
John Andrews
Steven Behrens
Joseph Bigg
David Boughton
Stephen Ciaramella
Anthony Cirino
Roger Cook
John Cooper
William Dey
Rod Gillespie
John Howell
Anthony Hunt
Thomas Koch
Richard Kraemer
Todd Lippincott
Peter Lodge
Guy Matthews
Kevin Miller
James Monroe
Kenneth Muff
Roy Neuman
Frank Oberski
Andreo Palmadessa
Frank Pierce
Gary Sinko
Steve Smolinski
James Swangler
Carol Jean Welsh
Michael Zeleznock

25 Years of Service
Kevin Addesso
Joseph Analore
James Anderson
Eugene Askin
Donald Baughman
Roy Bowles
Patrick Bresnen
James Brown
Michael Castaldo
Kenneth Chichura
Brian Clark
David Clarke
Louis Crammer
Fred Cristobal
James Dauphars
Vit Fojtik
George Franz
Brian Geimer
Rafael Gonzalez
George Graner
Wilfred Hector
Patrick Heitz
Timothy Herbert
Walter Hugg
Robert Jarreld
Michael Johnson
C. William Kingsland
Craig Kmiec
Carl Kneidinger
Barry Kotsak
James Lewis
Joseph Lynch
Bruce Martin
William Matthews
Jamie Mazzara
William McCurdy
Gregory McMahon
Dennis Mennella
Wallace Merchant
Wayne Morgan
James Nunn
Ronald Owens
Edward Owens
Manojkumar Patel
Kyle Rounsaville
Keith Schuchardt
James Sorenson
David Sprague
Richard Stefano
Louis Testa
Michael Trainor
Mitchell Troth
Paul Ulrich
James Whitehead
Christopher Wiley
Shazaliza Williams
Frederick Williams
Gary Workman

Capital Program Management

45 Years of Service
Daniel Evanko

40 Years of Service
David Bole
William Gulino
Robert Kopf
Ronald Maruca

35 Years of Service
Jane Allen
Felice Cappuccio
Glenn Cummings
Richard Dube

Capital Program Management

35 Years of Service

Bruce Hawkinson
Steven Hochman
Jeffrey Johnson
Yong Chol Kim
Andre Krawtschenko
Edward Myzie
Ralph Rich
Norbert Teufel

30 Years of Service

Walter Bulat
Steven Ciapanna
Jayant Dalal
Nona Davis
Michael DiPento
Anthony Evangelista
Robert Flanegan
Felix Fuster
Nicholas Gephart
Brad Hafner
Alanson Hall
Stephen Hammond
Darnell Hardwick
David Haslam
John Knapp
Ronald Kuzma
Timothy Lertch
Andrew Maevsky
Alan Margerum
Robert Marshall
Michael Mihalic
Charles Miller
John Mole
David Mudge
Rocco Picciolo
James Raperto
Peter Reimer
Mukesh Shah
Sean Sheehy
Gregory Soldwedel
Daniel Sullivan
Vello Vainojoe
Albert Virgilio
Warren Wentzel
Ronald Woolley
Alireza Zhav

25 Years of Service

Albert Adolf
Chimanlal Antala
Andrea Baj
Albert Balluch
David Barbalace
Patricia Calhoun
Kiong Chan
Amarjit Chawla
Sung Min Cho
Mahesh Choudhary
Stephen Cooper
Christine Coppola
Kevin Corcoran
Richard Crockett
Robert Cunningham
Sebastian DeAngelo
Judith Dowd
Alberto Escaro
John Essaian
Susan Fraczkiewicz
Alexander Fysz
Charnjit Gill
Roberto Giovannetti
Omar Hameed
Mark Hauske
Robert Holland
Jaroslaw Hucul
Paul Ignarri
Edward Inman
Richard Jaffe
Wynella Johnson
Walter Juraniec
Polina Knaster
David Kook
Robert Lake
Anne Lovering
William Manion
Mark Markley
Vincenzo Martorana
Gregory Maryak
Gilberto Morales
Robert Morley
Joseph Noto
Anthony Okafor
Joseph Olah
Ronald Pagodin
Francisco Palang
Jaswantkumar Parekh
Robert Parker
Ashvinkumar Patel
Barindrakumar Patel
Gaurangkumar Patel
Jayesh H. Patel
Jayesh P. Patel
Narendrakumar Patel
Naresh Patel
Shirish Patel
Upendrakumar Patel
Millard Paulus
Michael Popiel
Angelo Principato
Michael Priore
Jayantilal Rana
Billy Ricci
Harshad Ringwala
Stephen Rizzuto
Kenneth Robinson
Joseph Rosidivito
Suphrana Sargeant
Atul Shah
Pravin Shah
Jerold Shealey
Kiran Shelat
David Siefert
Robert Steinberg
Mark Strawn
Joseph Sullivan
Ramesh Suvagiya
Pamela Szargowicz
Surour Tadayoni
Amber Teague
Scott Thorn
Godfrey Tisseverasinghe
Gary Warga

Congratulations to all NJDOT 2011 Service Anniversary Award Recipients